



## PARENT CURRICULUM GUIDE



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GRADE **3**



*“WE KNOW THAT EVERY SINGLE PARENT CARES DEEPLY ABOUT THEIR CHILD’S ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT. THAT’S WHY WE ARE WORKING MORE CLOSELY WITH FAMILIES, BECAUSE WE KNOW THEIR INVOLVEMENT IS CRITICAL TO THE SUCCESS OF OUR CHILDREN, AND OUR SCHOOLS.”*

*- CHANCELLOR KAYA HENDERSON*

## How to Use the Parent Curriculum Guide:

This guide gives you the tools you need to support your child at home. In this booklet, you’ll find strategies based on the DCPS curriculum to help your child meet his or her learning goals. You’ll have a better understanding of what your child is learning in school and how you can further learning at home.

In addition, this guide provides specific strategies to implement at home for our Cornerstone assignments. Cornerstone assignments are high-quality, in-depth activities offered across the district that all DC Public Schools students will participate in during each unit of study. We have provided you with four sample Cornerstone assignments that your child may experience along with tips and suggestions on ways to support them at home.

For more information on Cornerstones visit [bit.ly/DCPSCornerstonesVid](https://bit.ly/DCPSCornerstonesVid).

## What You Can Do:

You play a very important role in your child’s academic performance. Here are some things you can do to support learning at home:

- ▶ Let your child know that education is the foundation for success.
- ▶ Know what your child is expected to learn in the 3rd grade.
- ▶ Help your child set high short-term and long-term academic goals.
- ▶ Provide a designated time and location to complete homework.
- ▶ Talk to your child about what is happening in school and constantly monitor progress.
- ▶ Advocate for your child.
- ▶ Share your child’s strengths with your child’s teacher.

## Questions to Ask Your Child’s Teacher:

When speaking with your child’s teacher about academic progress, here are a few questions you may want to consider asking:

- ▶ What are the learning goals? Can you show me examples of student work that meets the learning goals?
- ▶ May I see an example of my child’s work? How does it or doesn’t it meet these learning goals?
- ▶ Is my child at or above grade level, what extra support is available? What can I do at home?
- ▶ What classroom routines do you have that should also be used at home?
- ▶ What kinds of questions could I ask my child on a daily basis about your class?

## Talking to Your Child:

Good conversations help our children see that we are interested in their lives. Here are a few conversation starters you may want to consider asking:

- ▶ Tell me about the best part of your day.
- ▶ What was the hardest thing you had to do today?
- ▶ Can you show me something you learned today?
- ▶ What’s the biggest difference between this year and last year?
- ▶ What rules are different at school than our rules at home? Do you think they’re fair?

# WHAT MY THIRD GRADER IS LEARNING

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS
























## MATH



## SCIENCE & SOCIAL STUDIES



<b>AUGUST–OCTOBER</b> 	<p>Students will learn how to ask questions and find answers to support ideas with key details while studying monuments, historical and cultural landmarks, and neighborhoods in Washington, D.C.</p> 	<p>Students will learn the basic concepts of multiplication and division. They will use props to gain a deep understanding of the concepts and to help solve word problems.</p> 	<p>Students will learn about the different D.C. neighborhoods, including their historical landmarks, monuments, resources, and physical features, as well as how D.C. functions as both a state and local government.</p> 	
<b>OCTOBER–DECEMBER</b> 	<p>Students will learn how to compare and contrast multiple texts on the same subject while studying democracy, learning about the three branches of U.S. government and debating various laws with supporting evidence.</p> 	<p>Students will learn how to use grid paper and small square tiles to model and determine area by counting the units within a shape.</p> 	<p>Students will learn about the organization and duties of D.C. government and discuss how citizens can play an active role.</p> 	
<b>DECEMBER–FEBRUARY</b> 	<p>Students will learn about figurative language analyze an author's word choice in poems, and write a story that includes well-developed characters while studying how an individual's motivations, feelings, and actions can alter the course of events.</p> 	<p>Students will learn about the numerator and denominator of fractions. They will use number lines to represent fractions, learn how to create and find equivalent fractions, and compare different fractions.</p> 	<p>Students will analyze the behavior of objects to predict their paths of motion.</p> 	<p>Students will learn about local economic structures, the importance of taxes, the role of money in society, and how resources produce goods and services.</p> 
<b>FEBRUARY–APRIL</b> 	<p>Students will learn to recognize the difference between author and reader's point of view, analyze texts to determine how ideas are connected, and employ key details to write an informative piece while studying magnetism and electricity.</p> 	<p>Students will learn to tell time to the minute, measure time intervals, and solve word problems about time. They will solve word problems about the measurement of length.</p> 	<p>Students will examine how weather can affect the quality of human life.</p> 	
<b>APRIL–JUNE</b> 	<p>Students will learn strategies for determining the meaning of unknown words and write a short research paper while studying various habitats such as jungles, rainforests, and the ocean floor.</p> 	<p>Students will learn to create and use picture and bar graphs to solve word problems, divide shapes into equal parts, and categorize shapes based on traits like sides and angles.</p> 	<p>Children will study and explain why only species that are able to adapt can survive when an ecosystem changes.</p> 	



## ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS CORNERSTONE

In this Cornerstone, students study Washington D.C.'s various monuments, historical and cultural landmarks, and neighborhoods. The Cornerstone provides an opportunity for students to use research skills to learn about the historical significance of their neighborhood. Using text features and informational text writing, they create a travel guide or webpage to encourage people to visit their community.

### How You Can Help Your Child:

- ▶ Visit the local library with your child and check out books about their chosen landmark or monument.
- ▶ Help your child get excited by visiting various DC landmarks/monuments ( i.e. The Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, the National Air and Space Museum, the Washington Monument, and the White House). Be sure to discuss what you saw.

## SCIENCE CORNERSTONE

In this Cornerstone, students read *Suman Crosses the Karnali River*. The Cornerstone provides an opportunity for students to become geotechnical engineers as they work with a model riverbank, and study soil properties to examine maps to assess the potential for erosion at different sites along the river.

### How You Can Help Your Child:

- ▶ View the “Mudslide Mayhem” video (<http://bit.ly/DCPSMud>) from National Geographic with your child and discuss what causes mudslides. Take the “What would you do?” quiz during the video. Talk about your answers and research mudslides with your child to find out who is right!



### Year long learning tips:

- ▶ Play “Another Way to Say...” The goal is to find words that have a similar meaning to the selected word. So if you choose the word “big,” your child can take turns with her siblings or friends finding similar words, such as “huge,” “enormous,” or “large.” Give each child 10 seconds to come up with a suggestion. This helps build vocabulary and memory skills, and discussing how exactly the chosen words differ from each other adds another dimension to the game.
- ▶ When your child asks for help, provide guidance, not answers. When helping your child, ask guiding questions, such as “Where do you begin?”, “What do you need to find out?”, or “Can you show me in a drawing how you got the answer?”
- ▶ Play Vocabulary games. Make a game out of broadening your child’s vocabulary. Choose five new words for your child to learn each week and see how often everyone in the family can use those words in everyday conversation. This will help improve your 3rd grader’s vocabulary, reading comprehension, and speaking skills.

## VISUAL ARTS THEATER CORNERSTONE

In this Cornerstone, students will focus on character development and motivation, and how these affect a course of events within a literary work. This will be joined by a visual arts and theater experience in which the students will create puppets and scenery for puppet performances. Students will work in groups to act out scenes during which their individual characters interact based on their motivations and feelings.

### How You Can Help Your Child:

- ▶ Early in the process, families can share stories of times when they were proud of their children, to be used as source material for narrative writing. Additionally, families can listen to, share, and discuss songs that elicit strong feelings and convey a story. Students will be able to share their work with their families through recording and/or performance (both at home and publicly). The class may choose to create a playlist of the generated songs and share the whole set, as well.

## ART CORNERSTONE

In this Cornerstone, students will study democracy by exploring the barriers to voting faced by various groups in the United States of America. Students will evaluate information from multiple sources, and will create a poster encouraging adults to take an active role in government by voting. The Cornerstone provides an opportunity for students to use their knowledge about voting rights to choose whether they believe voting is a right or a responsibility.

### How You Can Help Your Child:

- ▶ Visit the local library with your child and check out books about voting rights.
- ▶ Visit the National Museum of African American History and Culture or take a tour of the Sewell-Belmont House Museum with your child to see how voting rights impacted African Americans and women.
- ▶ Ask questions that can't be answered with a simple "yes," "no," or "OK." Say, "Tell me more about..." or "What do you think about...?"

## Year Long Learning Tips:

- ▶ Children learn better when they can connect what they don't know to something they are familiar with. For example, fractions are part of a whole. You can help your child understand fractions by relating fractions to pizza slices. "2/8 is the same thing as eating two slices of a pizza that originally had eight slices."
- ▶ Encourage storytelling. Children love to tell stories with each other, the more outlandish, the better. Encourage your child to start a progressive story with a group of friends. Begin it with a catchy opening, like "The robot stepped off of the bright purple spaceship into a vivid green golf course." Then, have the children pass the paper around. Each writer adds a sentence or two until the writers collectively decide the story is finished. Watch the kids explode with laughter when they read the collaborative story out loud.
- ▶ Ask questions that can't be answered with a simple "yes," "no" or "OK." Say, "Tell me more about..." or "What do you think about...?"



# ACTIVITIES TO PRACTICE WITH MY THIRD GRADER



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Read together everyday for 20 minutes.

AUGUST-  
OCTOBER



Write a letter to someone from out of town inviting them to D.C. Convince them to visit by writing about the fun things and historical sites they could experience on their visit.



Keep a journal recording how much time you spend reading each day! List your favorite characters from each story and identify a place in the story where the character shows a quality that you admire.



Practice multiplication with small household items. To solve  $3 \times 5$ , fill 3 cups with 5 small objects then count the items in the cups to discover that the answer is 15. Try with other numbers!



Visit the National Zoo! Record observations (like color, shape, and size) of your five favorite animals. Keep your observations as objective as possible. For example, "The lion is tan and strong."



Create a D.C. scavenger hunt of museums, monuments, and places significant to your family. Then make a plan to visit all of your destinations. Be sure to research each location before your visit!



OCTOBER -  
DECEMBER



Use the small tiles on the ground in the metro to calculate the area of different shapes. Try to find the area of the rectangle between the escalator and the edge!



Visit your local library to check-out three new books! Visit [bit.ly/FindMyLibrary](http://bit.ly/FindMyLibrary) to find your local library branch!



Discuss the role students play in schools and its governing structures. What role do teachers play? How about families?



What would it be like to be President for a day? What challenges might you face and what decisions might you make? Write a short story about a day in the life of the President.



Plan a trip to the National Mall! Explore the history of one of the monuments or memorials. Discuss what the monument means to you.



DECEMBER -  
FEBRUARY



Visit a park to observe and predict patterns in the motion of objects, like the back and forth motion of swinging on a swing, rolling a ball back and forth, or going up and down on



Create a family budget tracker. After a week, review the tracker. What predictions can you make about the remainder of the month based on what you see from the first week?



Write a poem or song lyrics that tell about a time you made a bad choice and what you learned. Share your new creation (and lesson) with friends or family.



Speed up your typing skills with the fun games and activities at [bit.ly/TypingFun](http://bit.ly/TypingFun). Can you win all of the games?!



Chop a food (apples are great for this!) into different, equal parts. Identify what the fractional amount of each item would be. For example, an apple cut into 3 slices would have slices worth  $\frac{1}{3}$ .



FEBRUARY -  
APRIL



February is Heart Health Month! Practice jumping rope to for your heart's health! Take your pulse before and after to see how hard your heart is working. Visit [bit.ly/DCPSPulse](http://bit.ly/DCPSPulse) to learn



Imagine living in two extreme climates such as Antarctica or a desert. Make a pros and cons list of each. Which would you rather live in for 2 weeks?



Visit the National Cherry Blossom Festival [bit.ly/DCPSC Cherry](http://bit.ly/DCPSC Cherry).



When traveling to different places, record the time when leaving the house. Then record your arrival time and determine how long the trip took.



Can you find a magnet? Use it! Take a walk around the neighborhood. What does the magnet stick to? Why? Keep a journal of your discoveries.



APRIL -  
JUNE



Create a bar or picture graph to determine how many various kitchen items (like pots, pans, forks, spoons, or spices) are in your home. What items do you find the most of in your home?



Visit the Kenilworth Park and Aquatic Gardens. Look for frogs on a pond tour, every weekend at 10 a.m. Visit [nps.gov/keaq](http://nps.gov/keaq) for more information.



What if your class looked like the ocean floor? Write a short story and draw an illustration.



What are your summer plans? Brainstorm five activities you can do together to keep learning over the summer.



Spend a day at the Smithsonian National Zoo and learn about the animals' survival skills in their particular environment. Visit [bit.ly/DCZoo](http://bit.ly/DCZoo) for more information.

